

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets is configured to be secured to the wall at edges of the opening.

5. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets further comprises connectors for connecting the bridge to the premises wiring in a splice fashion.

6. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets is attachable to the wall in a removable manner.

7. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets includes a plug for insertion into a modular jack and to be thereby communicably coupled to the premises equipment.

8-11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein the data infrastructure further comprises a private branch exchange.

13. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein the faceplate of at least one of the plurality of communication outlets includes an analog telephone interface operatively coupled to the bridge.

14. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein the faceplate of at least one of the plurality of communication outlets includes a digital telephone interface operatively coupled to the bridge.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes data encryption.

17. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes user authentication.

18. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes a diagnostic and status reporting to the user.

19. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 18, wherein the diagnostic is operative to detect a problem with a connection between the user data device and the communication outlet, and wherein the status reporting is operative to notify the user of the detected connection problem.

20. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, each of the plurality of communication outlets further comprises power circuitry operative to receive DC power from the data infrastructure or one of the data interfaces.

21. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) services.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein the plurality of data interfaces and the bridge are arranged on standard circuit cards disposed in the communication outlet.

24. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 23, wherein the standard circuit cards are Personal Computer Memory Card International Association (PCMCIA) circuit cards.

25-32. (Canceled)

33. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of communication outlets further comprises a processor operative to provide at least one high-level service to the user via at least one of the data interfaces.

34. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes a web service.

35. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 34, wherein the web service provides a link to a web service in at least another of the plurality of communication outlets.

36. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 35, wherein the web service in the at least another communication outlet provides status information concerning the at least another communication outlet.

37. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 34, wherein the web service provides a link to a web service in the data infrastructure.

38. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 37, wherein the web service in the data infrastructure provides status information concerning a network between the at least one of the plurality of communication outlets and the data infrastructure.

39. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of communication outlets is configured to be secured to the outlet box.

40. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of communication outlets is configured to be secured to the electric wiring raceway.

41. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein at least one of the data interfaces includes a link-layer data interface.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Previously Presented) A decentralized computer network according to claim 48, wherein the faceplates of at least some of the plurality of communication outlets include a plurality of connectors.

44-47. (Canceled)

48. (Currently Amended) A decentralized computer network, comprising:  
a data infrastructure, comprising data processing equipment; and  
a plurality of communication outlets, each of the communication outlets comprising:  
a faceplate;  
a bridge; and  
a plurality of data interfaces, each of the data interfaces being:  
accessible via the faceplate for connection to a user data device; and  
connected to the bridge and, via a network connection provided by the  
bridge, to the data infrastructure;  
wherein the outlet is configured for attachment to at least one of:  
an outlet box;  
an opening in a wall; and  
~~and an~~ electrical wiring raceway;  
such that, after attachment, the faceplate is accessible to a user.
49. (Previously Presented) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of data interfaces comprises a wireless data interface.
50. (Previously Presented) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of data interfaces comprises a jack.
51. (Previously Presented) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of data interfaces comprises a wireless data interface and a jack.
52. (Previously Presented) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein the data infrastructure further comprises premises wiring interconnecting the data processing equipment to the plurality of communication outlets.
53. (Previously Presented) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein the data infrastructure further comprises a wireless network connection interconnecting the data processing equipment to the plurality of communication outlets.

54. (Previously Presented) A method for providing network access over existing premises wiring to a data infrastructure that includes data processing equipment, comprising:
- providing a plurality of communication outlets, each of the communication outlets including a bridge;
  - attaching each of the plurality of communication outlets to a respective at least one of an outlet box, an opening in a wall and an electrical wiring raceway; and
  - electrically connecting the bridge of each of the plurality of communication outlets to the existing premises wiring.
55. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 54, further comprising:
- connecting a private branch exchange to the existing premises wiring, such that the bridge in at least one of the plurality of communication outlets is operatively coupled to the private branch exchange; and
  - connecting a telephone to one of the plurality of communication outlets, thus establishing a connection, through the bridge of the communication outlet, between the telephone and the private branch exchange.
56. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 54, further comprising:
- providing a processor within at least one of the communication outlets; and
  - providing, by the processor, at least one high-level service via at least one of the data interfaces of the communication outlet.
57. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 56, wherein providing the at least one high-level service comprises providing a web service.
58. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 57, wherein providing the web service comprises providing a link to a web service in at least another of the plurality of communication outlets.

59. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 58, wherein providing the web service further comprises providing status information concerning the at least another of the plurality of communication outlets.

60. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 56, wherein providing the at least one high-level service comprises providing a link to a web service in the data infrastructure.

61. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 56, wherein providing the at least one high-level service comprises providing status information concerning a network between the at least one plurality of communication outlets in the data infrastructure.

62. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 54, wherein electrically connecting the bridge comprises inserting a plug of the respective communication outlet into a modular jack that is electrically connected to the existing premises wiring.